The listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-21.

Please add claims 22-27 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A m~~M~~ethod for the production of a porous ceramic body, especially of a filter membrane, comprising the following steps:

~~A) S~~sselecting~~on of~~ a first ceramic powder ~~(coarse grain)~~ with a first grain size class, wherein the first ceramic powder substantially comprises α-SiC grains aside from unavoidable contaminants;

~~B) S~~sselecting~~on of~~ a second ceramic powder ~~(fine grain)~~ with a second grain size class~~, which~~ that is substantially ~~far~~ smaller than the first grain size class, wherein the second ceramic powder substantially comprises α-SiC grains~~, are essentially exclusively used,~~ aside from unavoidable contaminants~~, as ceramic grains for both the first and the second ceramic powder~~;

~~C) M~~mixing of the first and second ~~two~~ ceramic powders to produce a powder with a bimodal grain size distribution;~~ and~~

shaping of a molded body from the powder mixture;~~ as well as~~

~~D) H~~heating and conditioning of the molded body at a temperature and for a period of time such that, through recrystallization of the molded body, the grains with the second grain size are dissolved and, through attachment of the material of the second ceramic grains to the first ceramic grains, these are firmly linked to each other~~.~~; and

~~E) L~~layer-wide repeating~~tion~~ of ~~stages A) to D)~~ said selecting first and second ceramic powders, said mixing of the first and second ceramic powders, said shaping of a molded body, and said heating and conditioning with ceramic powders of different grain sizes~~,~~ ~~especially ever-decreasing mean grain sizes, such that a gradient with regard to the mean grain size is created transverse to the layers in the ceramic body~~.

2. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~characterized by the fact that~~ wherein at least one chosen from the grains of the first ceramic powder and/~~or~~ the second ceramic powders have at least one chosen from a defined maximum grain size and/~~or~~ a defined minimum grain size.

3. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claims 1 ~~or 2 characterized by the fact that in method step C)~~, wherein mixing of the first and second ceramic powders comprises the ceramic powders being~~are~~ present in a slurry, and wherein said shaping of a molded body is effected by casting.

4. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1 ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that prior to method step D)~~, including ~~a~~ drying the molded body prior to said heating and conditioning ~~step occurs~~.

5. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1 ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that~~, wherein the mixing ratio between the first and second ceramic powder ~~(coarse grain/fine grain)~~ lies in the range of approximately 6:1 to 1:1~~, preferably 4:1 to 2:1~~.

6. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1 ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that~~, wherein the size ratio between the mean grain size ~~or~~ of the smallest grains of the first ceramic powder and the mean grain size of the largest grains of the second ceramic powder ~~(coarse grain/fine grain)~~ lies in the range of approximately 6:1 to 2:1~~, preferably 3:1~~.

7. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that~~ wherein batches of narrow grain size distribution are used for the first and second ceramic grains.

8. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that~~ wherein grain bands or grain mixtures having defined upper and lower grain size are used ~~not only~~ for the first ceramic grains~~, but also~~ and grain bands or grain mixtures

having a defined upper grain limit are used for the second ceramic grains, with the size ratio between the finest grain fraction of the first ceramic grains and the largest grain fraction of the second ceramic grains chosen to be at least 2:1.

9. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims **characterized by the fact that**~~ wherein shaping of the molded body ~~in method step C)~~ proceeds on a substrate~~, especially in pore channels of a porous ceramic body of the same material~~.

10. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims **characterized by the fact that**~~ wherein the ceramic grains are of non-oxide ceramic and ~~especially~~ of the same type.

11. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims **characterized by the fact that**~~ wherein for a first layer~~,~~ the grain sizes of the first ceramic powder are in the range of 6.5 µm (FEPA 800) to 23 µm (FEPA 360), wherein for a second layer the grain sizes of the first ceramic powder are in the range of 1.5 µm (JIS 7000) to 6.5 µm (FEPA F800), and wherein for a third layer the grain sizes of the first ceramic powder are in the range of 0.5 µm (JIS 10000) to 2 µm (JIS 6000), and wherein the second ceramic powder for the first, second, and third layers is at least one chosen from ~~with preferably~~ JIS 6000 ~~being used as the second ceramic powder~~ for the first layer, JIS 9000 for the second layer, ~~and~~ JIS 20000 for the third layer~~,~~ and ~~or in each case~~ equivalent grain bands for each of the first, second, and third layers.

12. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims **characterized by the fact that**~~ wherein heating and conditioning comprises selecting the temperature and firing duration ~~in method stage D) is chosen~~ such that generally all ~~hardly any~~ grains of the second ceramic powder are no longer present ~~any longer~~ in the microstructure of the finished ceramic body and such that ~~at the same time~~ the grain size remains as close as possible in the region of the initial grain size of the first ceramic powder ~~and~~ to thereby generally prohibit giant grain growth ~~is avoided~~.

13. (currently amended) The ~~M~~method of claim 1, ~~any of the previous claims characterized by the fact that~~ wherein grain sizes in the range of 0.9 µm to 17 µm are used for the first ceramic powder and grain sizes in the range of 0.2 µm to 3 µm are used for the second ceramic powder.

14. (currently amended) A ~~P~~porous ceramic body, ~~especially made in accordance with a method of any of the previous claims,~~ said ceramic body comprising a substantially ~~with an essentially~~ homogeneous structure of interconnected, open pores and ceramic grains, with ~~the~~ said ceramic grains ~~essentially~~ having a substantially rounded shape, and with both ~~the~~ said ceramic grains and ~~the~~ said open pores ~~essentially~~ lying substantially ~~at least~~ in defined ranges in at least one chosen from a narrow grain size range ~~or~~ and a narrow pore size range, ~~characterized by the fact that~~ wherein the defined ranges of said narrow grain size range or said narrow pore size range distribution are present as layers on a coarse-porous support ~~or especially in pore channels of a coarse-porous support~~, and ~~that the~~ said ceramic body ~~consists, except for unavoidable contaminants, exclusively of~~ substantially comprises recrystallized RSiC aside from unavoidable contaminants.

15. (currently amended) The ~~C~~ceramic body ~~of any~~ of claims ~~13 to~~ 14, wherein ~~characterized by the fact that the~~ said ceramic grains are present ~~essentially~~ in substantially completely crystalline form.

16. (currently amended) The ~~C~~ceramic body ~~of any~~ of claims ~~11 to 15~~ 14, wherein ~~characterized by the fact that the~~ said ceramic body is ~~essentially~~ substantially free of melt phase.

17. (currently amended) The ~~C~~ceramic body ~~of any~~ of claims ~~11 to 16~~ 14, wherein ~~characterized by the fact that the~~ said ceramic grains are of non-oxide ceramic and ~~especially~~ substantially of the same type.

18. (currently amended) The ~~C~~ceramic body ~~of any~~ of claims ~~11 to 15~~ 14, wherein said ceramic body ~~characterized by the fact that it~~ has adequate strength for use as a filter membrane~~, especially in a cross-flow membrane filter~~.

19. (currently amended) A~~Filter, especially~~ cross-flow membrane filter, said filter comprising ~~with~~ a ceramic body ~~of any of the previous product claims, especially an SiC membrane,~~ on a SiC coarse-porous support, said ceramic body including at least one layer, said at least one layer including; ~~especially SiC support, preferably made by any of the previous method claims.~~

a first ceramic powder, said first ceramic powder substantially comprising SiC and having a first grain size, and

a second ceramic powder, said second ceramic powder substantially comprising SiC and having a second grain size, said second grain size being substantially smaller than said first grain size,

wherein via recrystallization said second ceramic powder is dissolved and attached to said first ceramic powder such that said second ceramic powder is firmly linked to said first ceramic powder, and wherein said ceramic body comprises a substantially homogenous structure of interconnected open pores and ceramic grains with said ceramic grains having a substantially rounded shape, and wherein said ceramic grains and said open pores lie substantially in defined ranges in at least one chosen from a narrow grain size range and a narrow pore size range.

20. (currently amended) The ~~F~~filter of claim 19, said filter ~~characterized by the fact that it~~ exhibitings~~, with a double-layer membrane~~ at 1 bar TMP in the test on water~~,~~ a flow greater than 5~~, preferably 6, especially 8~~ m^3 per m^2 per bar per hour when said ceramic body includes two layers, and ~~or, with a three-layer membrane,~~ greater than 3~~, preferably 4, especially 6~~ m^3 per m^2 per bar per hour when said ceramic body includes three layers.

21. (currently amended) The ~~F~~filter of claim 19 ~~or 20, characterized by the fact that~~ wherein said ~~the~~ filter further~~more~~ comprises a layer of porous oxide ceramic~~, especially~~ adapted for nanofiltration.

22. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said layer-wide repeating comprises ceramic powders of ever-decreasing mean grain sizes such that a gradient with regard to the mean grain size is created transverse to the layers in the ceramic body.

23. (new) The method of claim 5, wherein the mixing ratio between the first and second ceramic powder lies in the range of approximately 4:1 to 2:1.

24. (new) The method of claim 6, wherein the size ratio between the mean grain size of the smallest grains of the first ceramic powder and the mean grain size of the largest grains of the second ceramic powder is approximately 3:1.

25. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein the substrate comprises a porous ceramic body of the same material, and wherein shaping of the molded body proceeds in pore channels of the substrate.

26. (new) The ceramic body of claim 14, wherein said layers on said coarse-porous support are present in pore channels of said coarse-porous support.

27. (new) The ceramic body of claim 18, wherein said ceramic body has adequate strength for use as a cross-flow membrane filter.

28. (new) The filter of claim 20, wherein said filter exhibits a flow of approximately 8 m^3 per m^2 per bar per hour when said ceramic body includes two layers, and wherein said filter exhibits a flow of approximately 6 m^3 per m^2 per bar per hour when said ceramic body includes three layers.